

Nest Boxes ~ Technical Information



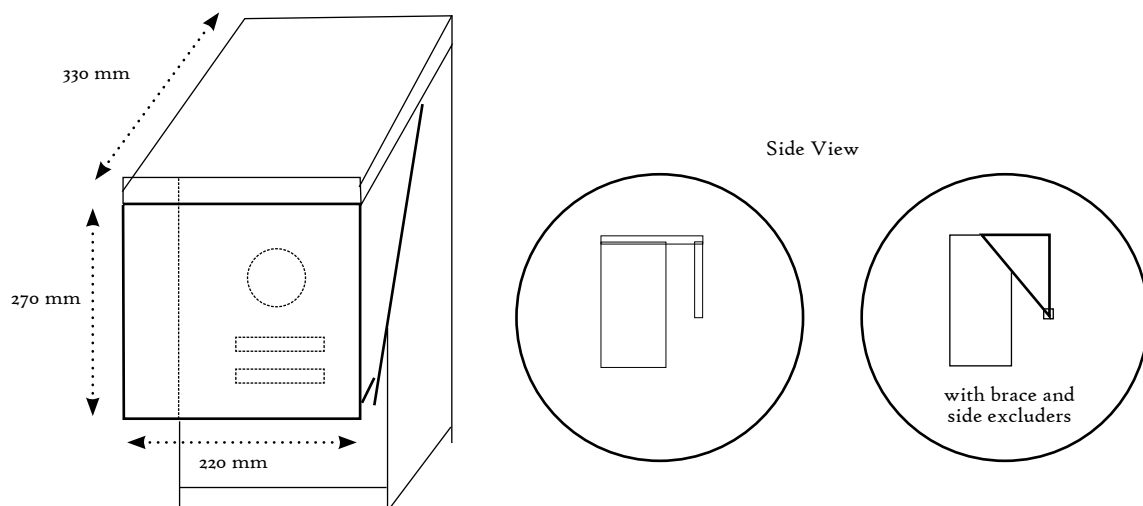
Purple-crowned Lorikeet © Birds Australia

Nest boxes are an important aspect to wildlife conservation in any areas where natural nesting hollows are not available. This information sheet provides a little extra technical assistance for anyone who wants to go the next step, and make or install a nest box. For a general introduction to the importance of nest boxes, please read Birds Australia Information Sheet #9 entitled 'Nest Boxes for Native Birds'.

The Anti-Myna Baffle

The Anti-Myna Baffle is a simple device which shields the entrance hole to the nest box, and prevents Common Mynas from entering (they always fly directly to the entrance of the nest hollow), while allowing access to rosellas and other parrots, which usually climb up to the entrance of their nesting hollow, and so are able to climb between the baffle and the nest box. It is important to provide a 'ladder' for the parrot to climb up the entrance — chisel or saw a few horizontal grooves into the front of the nest box, or attach a small piece of wire mesh that they can climb up, but do not attach a stick, which may allow Mynas to land there.

The distance that the baffle is placed in front of the nest box should be the same as the diameter of the entrance hole.



A Few More Useful Tips for Nest Boxes

- Add a few wood shavings to the bottom of your nest box; some parrots will not nest there without them.
- In vertical (or steeply sloping) nest boxes it is usually a good idea to install a 'ladder' for birds to climb out of the nest, especially if the inner surface of the nest box is relatively smooth. A few horizontal grooves, either sawn or chiselled into the wood will act as 'steps', as will a strip of wire mesh.
- Drill a few drainage holes in the floor of the nest box.

Recommended Dimensions for Nest Boxes

The different requirements of our wildlife necessitate that nest boxes are specially designed to incorporate essential features that mimic the characteristics of their natural nesting hollows. Here are the vital statistics for nest boxes designed to be used by certain species.

SPECIES	INTERNAL DIAM (mm)	DEPTH/LENGTH (mm)	ENTRANCE DIAM (mm)	VERTICAL/HORIZ.	HEIGHT (m)
Black-Cockatoo, Glossy	300	870–1000	160 x 200	v	
Boobook, Southern			150	h	
Cockatoo, Sulphur-crested			150	v	
Corella, Little			150		
Corella, Long-billed			150		
Duck, Australian Wood	200	500	120	v	6
Duck, Pacific Black	450 x 300		120	h	
Galah	200	650	120–150	v	
Kestrel, Nankeen	400	750	100	v	
Kingfisher, Sacred	130	600–900	75	h	
Kookaburra, Laughing	300–400 x 150–200	500–600	open, >130	h	5–10
Lorikeet sp.	120	600	60	h	5–10
Lorikeet, Little			25–30		5
Lorikeet, Musk			25–30		
Lorikeet, Purple-crowned			25–30		
Owl, Eastern Barn	400	750	open, >150	h	5
Owlet-nightjar, Australian	100–150	300–400	30–120	v	5
Pardalote sp.	120	400–500	30–45	h	5
Pardalote, Striated	90–200 x 120–150	200	25–35	v/h	
Parrot, Red-rumped	100–240	400–600	25–120	v/h	5
Rosella sp.	120–200	350–800	70–120	v/h	5
Rosella, Crimson	150–200	350–800	75–100	v/h	5–6
Rosella, Eastern	135–240	350–800	60–100	v/h	5–6
Shrike-thrush, Grey	150–200 x 200–300	150–300	open, >150	h	
Swallow, Welcome	130		open	h	3
Teal, Chestnut	200–400 x 300	450–750	80–120	v	1.5
Teal, Grey	200–450 x 300	450–750	80–120	v	1.5
Treecreeper sp.	90–150	100–400	50–80	v	
Treecreeper, White-throated	75–100	300–400	50–70	v	5
Antechinus, Yellow-footed			20–25		
Bat sp.	70–100 x 150–240	200–250	15–20 (slit)	v	
Bat, Chocolate Wattled			10 (slit)		
Bat, Gould's Wattled			10 (slit)		
Bat, Lesser Long-eared			10 (slit)		
Brush-tail-Possum	210 x 240–320	380–400	90–150	v	4–8
Glider, Feather-tailed			20–25		
Glider, Squirrel			60		
Glider, Sugar	200–250	300–450	25–50	v	4–8
Phascogale, Brush-tailed			25–30		
Ringtail-Possum	250	350–400	60–90	v	4–8

Further Reading ~ for specific nest box designs, consult any of these references:

Adams, George Martin. (1980). *Birdscaping Your Garden*. Rigby, Adelaide.

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club. (n.d.). *Cosy Abodes for Fur and Feather*. (leaflet).

Elliot, Rodger. (1994). *Attracting Wildlife to Your Garden*. Lothian, Melbourne.

Grant, Peter. (2003). *Habitat Garden. Attracting Wildlife to Your Garden*. ABC Books, Sydney.

Melbourne Zoo Education Service. (n.d.). *Nest Boxes for Native Birds and Mammals*. (leaflet).

Morrison, Rob. (1996). *The Nestbox Project*. Nature Australia 25(5): 56–63.

Pedler, Lynn. (1996). *Artificial nest hollows for black-cockatoos*. Eclectus 1: 13.

Pizzey, Graham. (2000). *The Australian Bird Garden. Creating Havens for Native Birds*. Angus & Robertson, Melbourne.

RSPCA. (n.d.). *Learn to Live with Possums*. (leaflet).